

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 02879 080807Z
ACTION AID-31

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IGA-02 EB-08 /052 W
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R 071515Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6105
INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 2879

PASS AID

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID SL
SUBJECT: OICI SIERRA LEONE

REF: (A) FREETOWN 2119, (B) FREETOWN 2130

1. CABINET HAS GIVEN OICI FORMAL AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE ITS PROGRAM IN SIERRA LEONE, AND HAS APPROVED MAKING AVAILABLE TWO SITES AT BO FOR OICI TRAINING PROGRAM.

2. CHANGES IN OICI'S TRAINING PROGRAM TO CONFORM TO LOCAL SALARY STRUCTURE AND IN THE COMPOSITION OF ITS LOCAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, BOTH INSISTED ON BY GOVERNMENT, HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE GOSL'S SATISFACTION. PERHAPS HOW OICI CAN BEGIN TO GENERATE THE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IT SO BADLY NEEDS. HOWEVER, OICI IS NOW FACED WITH ANOTHER MAJOR PROBLEM.

3. BO WAS THE SITE OF UNREST AT THE TIME OF LAST SPRING'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, IT BEING THE MAJOR STRONGHOLD OF THE OPPOSITION SLPP PARTY. AS A RESULT, IT IS NOT AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR THE OICI PROGRAM IN THE GOSL'S VIEW. THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION HAS THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT OICI MOVE TO PORT LOKO, OR, IF THIS IS NOT SATISFACTORY, TO MAKENI. BOTH TOWNS ARE IN SL'S NORTHERN PROVINCE, AN AREA WHICH IS DOMINATED BY
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THE GOVERNMENT (APC) PARTY. GOSL HAS NOT MADE MOVING FROM BO TO PORT LOKO OR MAKENI A CONDITION OF OICI'S CONTINUED OPERATIONS IN SL.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN MADE WITH BEST INTENTIONS ON PART OF GOVERNMENT AND PARTICULARLY VICE-PRESIDENT S.I. KOROMA. THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND HIS KINSMAN, THE

MINISTER OF EDUCATION, ARE AWARE OF OICI'S PRESENT PROBLEMS, WHICH STEM LARGELY FROM PRESIDENT STEVENS (GOLS'S UNEASINESS AT SEEING IT LOCATED IN THE STRONGHOLD OF THE OPPOSITION, SOME MEMBERS OF WHICH WERE ON THE OICI BOARD PRIOR TO THE RECENT CHANGES. THE VICE-PRESIDENT APPARENTLY HOPES BY THE MOVE TO BRING OICI UNDER HIS OWN PROTECTION IN HIS HOME DISTRICT WHERE IT CAN OPERATE WITHOUT FURTHER CHARGES OF INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNAL SL POLITICS. CONTINUED OPERATIONS AT BO COULD POSE FURTHER PROBLEMS FOR OICI, EXPOSE IT TO POSSIBLE HARRASSMENT AND REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS OBTAINING SOLID GOVERNMENT SUPPORT WHICH IT BADLY NEEDS IF APC/SLPP POLITICS AGAIN ERUPT.

5. EMBASSY'S VIEW IS THAT OICI IS RIGHTLY CONCERNED WITH THE COST OF A MOVE AND WITH THE FURTHER DELAY IN GETTING TRAINING COURSES UNDERWAY. BOYER AND HIS COLLEAGUES ARE OPPOSED TO ANY MOVE AND HAVE SO ADVISED OIC, PHILADELPHIA. THEY FEEL THAT THE COST OF INSTALLING AND EQUIPPING A NEW OFFICE AND A NEW TRAINING SITE PLUS COST OF MOVING STAFF, ALL EXPENSES THAT WOULD BE INCURRED FOR THE SECOND TIME, CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED. BOYER IS ALSO WELL AWARE THAT A MOVE WOULD RESULT IN THE OICI STAFF BEING INCOUNTRY A YEAR AND A HALF BEFORE ANY TRAINING COURSES BEGAN OPERATIONS.

6. EMBASSY SHARES OICI CONCERNS AT INCREASED COSTS AND TRAINING DELAYS AND FOR THOSE REASONS PREFERS HAVE OICI
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CONTINUE IN BO. HOWEVER, SHOULD INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION DETERIORATE AND OICI AGAIN BECOME FOCAL POINT OF GOSL SUSPICION EMBASSY MAY RECOMMEND MOVE EITHER TO PORT LOKO OR MAKENI.
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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONNEL TRAINING, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977FREETO02879
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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